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## ENGLISH JUDAISM.

## A CRITICISM AND A CLASSIFICATION.

"Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be. Why, then, should we desire to be deceived?"—BUTLER.

Two brilliant articles in the first number of this Review, both dealing with the most vital question with which a Jewish Review can be concerned—viz., What is Judaism?—offer such startlingly contradictory answers, that a simple layman like myself feels prompted to exercise his simple faculty of logical analysis in endeavouring to unravel the reasons of the difference. The more so when he calls to mind the many other answers he has seen or heard, the mutual contradiction of which, to speak algebraically, reduces the sum of meaning of the term "Judaism" to zero.

There must be something more than logomachy in this wrangle of *responsa*, though that never absent form of warfare is far from unpractised in it. Probably all the answers have a measure of truth. Judaism, as a religion, is so many-sided as to give scope for as many one-sided views of it; while the history of Judaism and the Jewish race (with the ever-present polarity which Professor Graetz himself has detected in it) has been so complex, and has been written and commented upon by so many persons, each with his attendant "equation," that the wonder would be if two independent inquirers like Professor Graetz and Mr. Schechter had answered or even understood the question in precisely the same way.

"What is Judaism?" asks Professor Graetz; and accepts the answer of Renan, "A minimum of religion," "moralised monotheism," "a religion without dogmas." "What is Judaism?" asks Mr. Schechter, and proceeds to enumerate the dogmas which have at different times and by different thinkers been supposed to constitute Judaism. But these answers are not so opposed as they seem at first sight. A very superficial examination reveals the fact that, paradoxi-

cally enough, Professor Graetz, the historian, takes the question in an abstract theological sense, and answers it by a philosophic formula of the essence of Judaism; while Mr. Schechter, who is inclined to abstract theology, takes it in an historical sense, and answers it by a review of past beliefs. Professor Graetz, piercing through the complexities of historical Judaism, strives to grasp its secret, to disentangle the ideal element which has served as the soul to a succession of bodies, beautiful, homely, or grotesque. Mr. Schechter strives rather to recall to us the successive avatars or re-incarnations of this immanent spirit. Professor Graetz is thus led on to assert that Judaism is or need not be anything but all soul; while Mr. Schechter contends for a certain proportion of fleshly garniture, though omitting to say how much is indispensable.

For it is to be noted that Mr. Schechter denies that the question "What is Judaism?" can be answered in Professor Graetz's sense at all. He appears to repudiate the idea that there can be an abstract theoretical Judaism, as there is a Nicene creed. Perhaps he does not sufficiently distinguish between Judaism as a definite body of beliefs, and Judaism as embodied in concrete Jews. "What is Judaism? It is impossible to say." Despite his protest against "the dogma of dogmalessness," he refuses to pin himself to any formulisation of articles. He, indeed, lays down two vague principles of faith and hope towards the beginning, and is tempted into some constructive suggestions towards the end, but on the whole he remains the purely scientific observer. The Jew by birth, seeking to know what he must believe to be a Jew by faith, gets some sort of answer from Professor Graetz, who starts by saying there are *no* articles of belief; but from Mr. Schechter, who starts by saying that there *are* articles of belief, he gets no answer at all. "So many Jews, so many Judaisms," is what Mr. Schechter plainly teaches. And if, in accordance with it, we seek at least some enlightenment in the knowledge of what is the conception of Judaism held by the Jew, Mr. Schechter, all we really learn is that it is "so many Jews, so many Judaisms." Though he emphasizes the necessity of religious dogma as opposed to hygienic or social conceptions of Judaism, he lays down only general maxims of purity and holiness in thought and act, which are common to most religions.

The history of theology is thickly strewn with grotesque propositions, but it would be difficult to find even in the treatises of the Schoolmen or the doctrine of the Sandemans anything more monstrous than the idea, at which Mr.

Schechter himself directs such exquisite satire, that a great historical religion, by which millions have lived, and for which myriads have died, has no definite set of beliefs. Even if these had never been reduced to a formula, they would still be implied in the actions of the followers of the religion; the most mechanical Mohammedan who observes the Ramadan, the most automatic Buddhist turning his prayer-wheel, thereby evidences the possession of a certain belief, howsoever little the intellectual proposition involved be present to his consciousness. Action has been asserted by Bain to be the only test of belief; it is, at any rate, a mark of it, on the assumption, of course, that the act is not hypocritical. And, therefore, to say with Professor Graetz that we ought not to speak of "the Jewish *faith*" because he chooses to narrow the meaning of the "ecclesiastical" term faith to a belief in the incredible (although Paley and Butler and Maurice, and hundreds of other Christian theologians, would assert the very opposite of *Credo quia absurdum*) is to offer a transparent temptation to the faithless, and a transparent absurdity to the faithful.<sup>1</sup>

What then is this body of beliefs? The differences between the answers of Professor Graetz and Mr. Schechter arise principally, as we now see, from their different ways of interpreting the question. But as Moses would probably not have recognised his religion in either of their expositions, we have still to inquire what, if anything, constitutes Judaism, and why so many discrepant things are said to do so, that Judaism is now literally "all things to all men." This inquiry will necessitate a deeper analysis.

But here some one may tell me that for *English* Judaism at least such an analysis is a work of supererogation. Admitting that Continental and Transatlantic Judaism is in places nebulous in outline, he may contend that, apart from a small minority of wrong-headed reformers, the bulk of English Jews are far from elastic in their religious conceptions, and that an impartial outsider examining our ecclesiastical organisation and our pulpit utterances could not but conclude that English Judaism is strong, solid, and self-consistent. In this strength of English Judaism lies its chief weakness.

The Reformation in English theology was the child of the Renaissance; not the Reformation in its narrow Lutheran sense, but the whole broadening of religious thought from the

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<sup>1</sup> The fact is that Professor Graetz, like many other Jews, having observed with joy that Judaism does not make so great a demand upon "faith" in the bad old sense as Christianity, has rushed to the other extreme, and asserted that it makes no demand at all.

sense of new horizons. As in the mind we cannot get intellect detached from emotion, so there can be no great change in the intellectual sphere without telling in the moral and religious sphere. English Jews (in their upper sections at least) have been subjected lately, in common with the whole civilised world, to a scientific Renaissance, in which the evolution doctrine has been only one of a host of dissolvent influences. There has been a great shaking up of old bones, much movement in sects and circles. Many of the Christian bulwarks have been swept away; but Judaism stands, so Jews assert, untouched. The breath of new knowledge has passed through English Judaism, the wind has passed with its pollen-dust; but has impregnated nothing. Even the Reform movement was more a natural and very trivial branching-out from the compulsion of inner forces, than a result of any new external influences.

When Professor Graetz said in his discourse at the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition that "If Israel is to think of realising its ideal task of bringing light to the nations, it must first and above all have light within itself," he uttered a truth; when he said that Anglo-Israel had this light, he uttered a compliment. For not only are we not irradiated with the light of the new knowledge, but we seem to have lost the light of the old. No one arises to offer us an authoritative "Moreh Nebuchim." English Judaism, like English Christianity, is an immense chaos of opinions—we do not know where we are, we have endless disputes in the press, where the real issue is obscured; endless arguments where neither party is convinced, because each starts from a different platform, and his reasonings gyrate in solitary superiority in a different "universe" or "closed sphere of thought"; terms are juggled with or used in different senses; all sorts of half-beliefs and no beliefs flit through the common mind; all sorts of compromises, more or less politic and more or less well intentioned, have been struck between faith and unfaith; all sorts of strange divorces have been effected between profession and practice; while smaller or larger doses of anodynes and opiates have been swallowed by not a few.

To attempt to flash the lantern of analysis on this fog cannot then be a work of supererogation.

I am quite aware that there are many who would prefer not to have the fog raised—for the fogs of the mind are rather comfortable than otherwise, and in any case come to be so. For there is a modesty of the mental organisation as of the physical; and an even greater modesty, for it shrinks even from the sight of its own nakedness. To some the veil

of fog brings mental repose, and to some creature-comforts, and very few care to carry torches, much less to agitate for the mental equivalent of consuming your own smoke. The great fog-disperser of antiquity was the rather got rid of by hemlock.

But now, as ever, there are still a few who wish to know what to believe rather than what they are wished to believe. Honest men have their rights as well as their wrongs, preponderant though the latter be; and among these rights, the right of pure air and sunlight is one that they will not have denied. No doubt the cry of "Let us alone" has some justification, and stirs a not unsympathetic fibre even in the heart of the iconoclast himself. For, in his weaker moments the iconoclast is apt to lament that he was born at a period of mental unrest, of criticism instead of conservatism or construction, till he philosophically reflects that the source of unrest is in his own constitution, that "*locum non animum mutant*" is equally true if we substitute "*tempus*" for "*locum*"; that no period is changeless; that the goal of to-day is the starting-point of to-morrow; that every age has its dissatisfied souls; that the problems of life are problems of dynamics, not of statics; that the eternal spirit of man toils in pursuit of ever-receding horizons of truth and morality.

## II.

The first thing to require of a man who presumes to answer the question, "What is Judaism?" is his attitude towards the dogma of Revelation. For the keystone of Judaism, as it is now understood by the great majority, and as it has always been understood, is Revelation. Judaism is a *revealed* religion. Of that there can be no doubt. It claims to light up the darkness of earth with light from heaven. Life, which the Anglo-Saxon Ealdorman truly figured as a lighted chamber, through which a bird flies from darkness to darkness, is by it *trans*-figured into a chamber wherein the bird flies from light and through light, till it *ceases* its flight at the uttermost extremity. Not from "Chaos and black night" comes the bird, but from the bosom of a righteous and loving, though stern and unchangeable, Being.

The physical principles of gravitation, of repulsion, the law of variation inversely with the square of the distance, the sine of refraction of water, the properties of isomorphous crystals, have not been laid down by human volition, though human volition has worked in all ages on these ready-made lines.

So with Judaism. Judaism is an arbitrary system, a system which may, indeed, be rational, but no more ceases to be arbitrary on that account than the rates of vibration of sound and light waves cease to be arbitrary because music and colour-harmonies spring from the tremor.

Yes, Judaism rests upon Revelation; and upon that revelation which is embodied in the Bible, or at least in the Pentateuch. Logically, indeed, in view of the marvellous nature of the history of Israel, in view of the unique character of the alleged bond between Israel and its God, of its supreme insistence on ethics at a period when the surrounding nations do not appear to have begun to work their way through the primitive beliefs of early man, or even in view simply of its historical persistence, one might conclude *a posteriori* that there must have been some peculiar revelation or inspiration vouchsafed to this people, and that Israel was, indeed, the chosen channel through which the knowledge of God was to flow to all men; though, at the same time, one might hold that the actual facts of this revelation or inspiration are distorted in the Biblical reflection of them. This is, perhaps, the view of Professor Graetz, though it is difficult to seize his precise attitude. And, indeed, the argument *a posteriori* is by no means to be sneered at; it may, not impossibly, convert men already deists into Jews, which is, perhaps, what Professor Graetz looks for; or it may even make Jews of atheists at one swoop. But, although this distinction between Revelation and the Bible is logically conceivable, I cannot call to mind any one who has made it explicitly.<sup>1</sup> Practically the two have, hitherto, stood or fallen together. Practically, also, each was the other. To deny Revelation meant to deny the Bible. To reject the Bible was to reject Revelation.

According to the dogmas and teachings of that Judaism in which for so many centuries Israel has lived and moved and had its being, the Judaism which I, like everyone else, was taught at school, and on which our whole religious organisation has been based, God revealed himself to Moses (through whose inspired authorship the Jews also obtained a cosmogony and a chronological history of the world from the Creation), and to the Hebrew nation, which he had long ago selected (as predicted to Abraham) to be the means of blessing all the families of the earth. The nation, convinced of God's power

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<sup>1</sup> Various recent books, *e.g.* R. F. Horton's "Inspiration and the Bible," take an analogous view in making the inspiration constituted by the moral and spiritual glow of the Bible, and allowing for the necessary limitations of its authors. This is a typical nineteenth century standpoint, and is that occupied by Ewald.

by its miraculous deliverance from Egypt, bound itself to obey not only the Decalogue, but a complicated code of religious and social polity, in which sacrifices played a large part. It wandered forty years in a wilderness, alternately punished and caressed like a froward child, showing, by its frequent revolts and backslidings, that the new morality was an accretion from without, and not yet an efflorescence from within. By the aid of its God it won a kingdom for itself, had a greater and a lesser period of material prosperity, both marked by the possession of a national temple, and divided from each other by a period of captivity; after which its history, though occasionally chequered by sunshine, is mainly a record of sorrow and exile, dispersion, persecution, and martyrdom, and of internal aberrations, schisms, and derelictions, tempered by undying hopes, gross or refined, of a golden future when its God would be the God of the whole earth, and Israel again a nation. In its highest spirits, in men like Jehuda Halevi, the nationalistic and religious conceptions were fused together in a glow of aspiration like the devotion to spiritual and to patriotic ideals in Mazzini; but even the humblest clay was vivified by a spark of the Promethean fire. Early in its history its connection with God became less direct; gradually its inter-communion with the Almighty faded away, till only an occasional Bath-Kol broke the divine silence, soon to become eternal. It preserved, however, the golden bridge of the Torah, with its vast supplementary traditions (partially, at least, necessitated by the inexhaustive phraseology of some of the Biblical precepts), afterwards not crystallised, but set down in all their heterogeneity; and created for itself a literature both parasitic and original, every word of which not merely breathes a faith in Bible and revelation, but exists only by virtue of Bible and revelation, as our modern treatises on astronomy owe their existence to that of planets and comets, as our modern studies of the right move in a particular chess gambit are only called into being by the arbitrary laws, long ago fixed, of the movements of the pieces. The divine records were studied as precious finalities—infallibilities; and not only was every book of the canon inspired, so that it was possible for a text from Zechariah to throw light upon or supplement a text from Genesis, but a certain measure of divine inspiration and of consequent unchangeability was even supposed to attach to the oldest commentaries on the oldest of the books of the first degree of inspiration. What wonder if every word was supposed to have a meaning apart from its force as an element of a sentence, every letter apart from its value as a component of a



word, every spur or flourish apart from its intention as an ornament of a letter? What wonder if R. David ben Yom-Tov Bilia seeks to make the existence of an allegorical meaning in the Torah an article of Judaism, if Abarbanel or David Ibn Simra declares that every word constitutes a dogma, or if the Cabbalists and others draw worlds of meaning from the puerilities of גמטריאות? Nowhere has *Mysticismus* a better excuse than when it has a divine but occasionally obscure document for the material of its web-spinning. The commandments were enumerated, and mystical reasons assigned for their number, while zealots sought to deduce additional precepts from them; all this exegetical and deductive activity developing a marvellous subtlety, as of a lawyer who finds or reconciles flaws in legal documents, or of a geometrical theorist who deduces ever smaller and smaller sub-theorems from the axioms granted and the propositions already proved. Such was the intense enthusiasm for the service of God that, like the king who offered a reward to the man who invented a new pleasure, the old rabbis were ready to award the palm to the man who could invent a new *Mitzvah*. So close, too, was the connection between *Mitzvoth* and morality, that ultimately they became interchangeable. A good deed was a precept, and a precept was a good deed. To give a man a precept means, in the idiom of the synagogue, to give him the opportunity of performing a pious act (which may be merely a custom), and implies, also, an addition to his spiritual wealth. Public and private conduct alike were pervaded by a deep sense of intimacy with God and special election, the "peculiarity" of the relations with the Almighty being emphasized at every step and turn by a host of ceremonial actions and expressions, and by a series of fasts and feasts, some Biblical, some growing out of the national history. The ever-lengthening chain of tradition was always attached to Sinai; the Mishna, itself a link between the eras before and the eras after Christ, enumerates the links by which it reached down to Hillel and Shammai; and thus Israel always preserved its unique consciousness of "personal identity," because it preserved a continuous recollection of its past life, and projected itself imaginatively into the future.

"For in the background figures vague and vast  
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime,  
And all the great traditions of the Past  
They saw reflected in the coming time."

Such, amid innumerable local and temporary variations, was the general composition of the religious and social

atmosphere in which many glorious spiritual blossoms were generated, as well as the inevitable proportion of thorns and darnel.

A few years ago such a cursory schoolboy account of Judaism in a serious article would justly have been laughed to scorn in England as platitudinarian and superfluous. That the whole secret of Judaism lay in the intimate relation of Israel and God; in the segregation of Israel by special rites and customs; in the election of Israel as a peculiar people with a beneficent mission; in the imposition on Israel of a code of laws, the object of which might in some instances be divined but which had to be obeyed in any case—this was such a commonplace, so latent in every act and thought of the Jew, that it needed no affirming. Doctors might sometimes disagree as to the dogmas of Judaism; but laymen expressed their “decision” in practical form by continuing in the route of tradition; and even the disputing philosophers occasionally forgot, as Mr. Schechter surmises, to include in their lists the belief in Revelation, as one might forget to include air in the contents of a room. And if the religious conceptions of the philosophers sometimes seem to transcend those of the crowd, we must not make the mistake of confounding Judaism with their individual intuitions or their individual reflections and adaptations of mediæval philosophy, any more than of confounding it with the crowd’s excogitations or refractions of mediæval superstitions. A religion can only be gauged fairly by its action on the “*homme sensuel moyen*,” not by the shape it takes in its moral or metaphysical geniuses. Many of the dogmatisers, no less than many of the rationalising or de-anthropomorphising commentators, seem to have legislated or expounded for themselves or their likes; to defend and dignify their own doubts or their own moral developments and grander breadths of vision; there is often a latent *apologia* behind. And even the free-thinking and noble-souled R. Chasdai Ibn Crescas explicitly accepts such doctrines as the immutability and perfection of the Torah, though well aware of the unsatisfactory nature of most of the reasonings on which they are based.

That, for the first time in its history, it has become necessary within the present century to say and to reiterate that Judaism is a revealed religion, as the other main religions of the past have all claimed in some sense to be, and that if it be not, it loses its *special* claims on our adherence—that if it does not reign by “divine right,” it must prove its right to reign at all—is surely a fact of grave portent and presage. That the

“people of the Book” should be losing faith in the absolute veracity of their possession, and should yet have but scant perception of the revolutionary importance of this change of standpoint, is a proof how the plain issue must have been distorted. For we are told by Professor Graetz that Judaism has no dogmas, that it is a minimum of religion; by Mr. Claude Montefiore<sup>1</sup> that it is not a *Gesetzes-Religion*, i.e., a Religion of Law which cannot progress without denying itself; by Mr. Oswald John Simon<sup>2</sup> that Sacrifice does not conform with his notion of God—all in the face of the precepts of the Bible, and in the face of its distinct prescription, “Ye shall neither add nor diminish.” While the whole tenour of the Pentateuch is that Religion, as Schopenhauer<sup>3</sup> claimed for a genuine philosophy, is independent of time, that the relation of the soul to God (as of the mind to the problems of Epistemology) is the same in all ages of the drama of life, however changing the stage-properties, we now find men of the race to whom this all-embracing, life-regulating Pentateuch was given, regarding this relation as mutable and variable with the growth of the spirit of man.

So unmistakably is the alternative of Revelation or Non-Revelation the *crux* of the whole matter, that I must emphasize it a little more. The general or even verbal Inspiration of the Old Testament has always been held, even by Christians who believed it had been superseded by a later inspiration. By a Jew of the past, or an orthodox Jew, or even an orthodox Christian of the present, the possibility of a Judaism without thorough belief in the Bible would have been scouted as a contradiction in terms. The peoples by whom this marvellous Book was received in translations have been at one on this point with the people who received it in the original. Mohammedans, as the Kusari already points out, may lose faith in the Koran, Christians in the Gospels; but the Old Testament is not affected by the discrediting of these derivative documents. The tree stands though the branches be lopped. Once sap the belief in the Old Testament, and with orthodox Judaism, orthodox Christianity and orthodox Mohammedanism must share in the general crash. That these assertions as to the standing of the Old Testament are warranted hardly needs proving. Yet for form's sake I will put in evidence one example of alien appreciation and comprehension of Judaism. I will translate an extract from that masterly sketch, Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire*

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<sup>1</sup> *A Justification of Judaism.*

<sup>2</sup> In *The Jewish Chronicle*.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.*

*universelle*. The great orator is defending the genuineness and antiquity of the Pentateuch against the hypothesis of its compilation by Ezra.

What shall I say of the agreement of the books of Scripture and of the admirable witness which all the epochs of the people of God bear to one another? The times of the second Temple suppose those of the first, and conduct us back to Solomon. The peace (in his reign) was only attained by fighting; and the conquests of the people of God lead us back to the Judges, to Joshua, and finally to the exodus from Egypt. In seeing a whole people issue from a realm to which it was alien, one remembers how it came there. The twelve patriarchs appear immediately; and a people which never regarded itself other than as a single family, leads us naturally to Abraham, its stem. Is this people wiser and less idolatrous after the return from Babylon? That was the natural effect of a great chastisement, due to its past sins. If this people boasts to have seen more miracles than other peoples, it may also boast to have the knowledge of God which no other people possessed. What *can* circumcision, and the feast of Tabernacles and Passover and the other festivals celebrated in the nation from time immemorial signify, if not the things found in the book of Moses? That a people distinguished from others by a religion and customs so peculiar, a doctrine so consistent and elevated, a so vivid remembrance of a long succession of facts so necessarily enchaind, ceremonies so regulated and customs so universal, should have been without a history marking for it its origin, and without a law prescribing for it its customs during a thousand years of *national* existence; and that Ezra should have commenced to wish to suddenly give to it, under the name of Moses, together with the history of its antiquities, the law which had fashioned its morals when it was taken captive and saw its ancient monarchy shattered—what more incredible fable could possibly be invented?

But it is really waste of time to try and prove what the universal view of the Jewish Bible and the Jewish religion has been. Is not the whole mass of Old Testament Christology based on the assumption of the inspiration of the former, and the supernatural imposition, if not the final character, of the latter? As, then, those who admit no, or only a modified inspiration and veracity in the Bible, are bound to explain away much of its contents as more or less a mixture of subjective illusions and historical distortions, and as such views of it must seriously modify their conception of Judaism; as they are bound to rationalise the myth of the Sinaitic covenant, and the election of Israel, and to trace the gradual crystallisation of legends, half truths, whole truths, and objectified aspirations and emotions into the (on the whole definitely shaped, and historically recorded) Judaism of the centuries after Ezra, or, at least, after Christ, in the same fashion as we can trace the genesis of State Christianity, it is plain that "the first thing to require of a man who presumes to answer the question, 'What is Judaism?' is his

attitude towards the dogma of Revelation." For, as this century is witnessing the decay of supernatural Christianity, and the occasional passing of the same into natural Christianity, so is it witnessing the decay of supernatural Judaism, and the occasional passing of the same into what I shall venture to call natural Judaism. Wellhausen, Kuenen, Renan; the new cosmological conceptions; the analytical spirit of the age, and the ever-growing acuteness of moral perception, have not been wholly without influence even in Anglo-Judæa. A due recognition of this fact will help us to unravel the medley constituted by modern expositions of Judaism. The Spanish, Provençal, and other philosophers, who laid down what it was necessary to believe to be a Jew, did, indeed, supply quite as great a diversity of formulæ as we are now encumbered with in our own generation; but the constants of these formulæ almost swamped the variants. They were all only variations on a dominant theme. But among the variations which are now offered us, there are some whence every trace of the ground-melody is departed. To borrow an illustration from Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, the new coat bequeathed to the Jews was clipped and lengthened, ornamented, even turned at will, by the earlier philosophical *Sartores*, but it always preserved a certain resemblance to a coat; whereas we now find *Sartores* who offer us sleeve-linings, but still insist on calling them coats.

No, Natural Judaism cannot be the same thing as Supernatural Judaism. Then what exactly is Natural Judaism?

### III.

Natural Judaism is a species of the genus Natural Religion. In the Anglo-Saxon image referred to above, the bird is assumed to be unable to discover anything as to the envolving darkness; but if we imagine it able to form a theory about the unknown, and responding in sympathetic magnetism to some great power without, we shall get a fair idea of what the development of religion from within, or "Natural Religion," means as contrasted with the external imposition of creeds. The German philosophical distinction between *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität* brings out well this difference between tuition and intuition, between the externalism of revelation and the internalism of development. *Sittlichkeit* is the morality of custom, the mere formal, unspiritual doing of acts, and believing of propositions. *Moralität* is the higher morality which emerges when the beliefs of the cruder period have

passed through the furnace of denial, have emerged more or less unscathed, and have become, by a moral renaissance, part of the spiritual being of the man or the race. (Then, I take it, these newly-acquired beliefs become automatic; thus another revolution is necessitated, the truths acquired by which again undergo rigescence, and so *ad infinitum*. In this sense I understand the Norwegian poet Ibsen's audacious paradox, "Freethinking is the only morality.") Now tradition and custom are quasi-revelations, and a revealed religion may pass like them through the fire and come out a natural religion. And just as the acts of *Moralität* may be the *very same as*, or may differ from the acts of *Sittlichkeit*, so the natural religion may be the same as, or different from, the supernatural religion. A very large modern school of Christian writers evolves Christianity from the constitution of things, *e.g.*, the necessity of self-sacrifice, though sometimes on very grotesque grounds. So Shadworth Hodgson claims that Wordsworth was the pioneer of the rediscovery from within of the truths "revealed" from without.

A "revealed" religion must, of course, be "natural" to a certain extent, inasmuch as it must correspond in some measure to the needs and experiences of those who profess it. We even find the latter sometimes justifying it by its nobility, thus testing it by "natural-religious" feeling; a proceeding of which the logic is most doubtful when the racial conscience has been moulded by the very doctrines it thinks to appraise. The appeal certainly tacitly admits that the religion revealed was a go-cart by which man was taught to walk, an *ipse dixit*, by which the value of honesty, chastity and mercy was taught to savages who had not yet had time to find it out. But though originally revealed, it might be rediscovered later, as the man solves a problem of which the boy had to be shown the solution. We thus see why some parts of religion are not inconsistently regarded as "natural," even though believed to be revealed. They are the common possessions of the moral consciousness of civilised man, which could not have failed to be discovered in time, and with travail, though luckily they were "revealed." Here is the common segment of the circles of both "Natural" and "Supernatural" Religion. Now in Judaism attempts have been made to eliminate that part of the "supernatural" which does not coincide with the "natural," and to leave only "Natural Judaism"; bolder spirits have attempted to reconcile the two by excogitating these eliminated portions, as in the effort to show valid sanitary reasons behind arbitrary dietary laws.

A Natural Religion may be got at either by the moral or

intellectual route, or both. Individual moral intuition and individual intellection, whenever their action is constructive, evolve some kind of Natural Religion (especially as in Seeley's wide definition this is not necessarily theistic in the old sense). And when metaphysical pondering of the problem of existence, and of the necessity of an unconditioned base for the conditioned; scientific study of the origin and development of religious ideas, whose existence and persistence may be held to imply an objective correlate; or emotional response to the lessons of life, or all combined have led to the conclusion that the *essential* ideas of a non-tribal Judaism are the best practical solution of the mysteries of Life and Death, then we get what I have called "Natural Judaism." But there are as many varieties of "Natural Judaism" as there are catalogues of the "essential ideas" of ordinary Judaism. These, with the other species and sub-species of Judaism to be met with in England, I shall now attempt to classify.

#### IV.

Such a classification, like all first classifications, must necessarily be tentative and imperfect. Some of the most important classes, too, may appear to consist of a single individual; this is so only to those who are not behind the scenes.

The word "Jew" is duplex. Formerly, a Jew by birth was a Jew by creed; the two meanings were inseparable. Now we must distinguish; and separate born Jews who profess Judaism, from born Jews who do not.<sup>1</sup> And here it must be observed that in practice our very first cut could not be made with absolute sharpness—the cloudy borderland, which usually prevents decisive dichotomy, being far from wanting. Men do not assess themselves and their beliefs as the auctioneer takes the inventory of a room. More or less consciously they hover between different opinions, and their physical condition and other circumstances are incessantly modifying their attitude towards any particular intellectual or religious proposition. To take a concrete instance, it would be difficult to diagnose the spiritual condition of the freethinker who marries in a synagogue in order, as he tells himself, to please

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<sup>1</sup> Under the term "born Jew," I include every one whose childish religious environment was to some extent Jewish, and therefore exclude persons of merely Jewish *descent*. Converts of alien races are so few as to form "*une quantité négligeable*." On the other hand, deserters from Judaism are daily growing more numerous; and the "orthodox" East-end itself contains a very nest of Atheistic Socialists.

his wife's relatives. Certainly the bridegroom himself could not tell how much was compromise, and how much if anything was the dim stirring of new emotions. So that a classification of Jews in the flesh would be not only vitiated by paradoxical breaches between (not insincere) profession and practice, and by the more self-conscious forms of hypocrisy or policy; but would also be rendered imperfect by the elusive and shifting character of human opinions. Nevertheless, despite these doubtful marginal cases, there is in real life, and still more in abstract logic, a broad distinction between professing Jews and non-professing Jews, and the same is true of subsequent scissions.

Non-professing Jews may not unprofitably be divided into those conscious to some extent of the racial bond, and those who through shame or indifference have allowed the feeling of brotherhood to decay. Each of these classes may be again divided (though perhaps some of these, as well as of my minor classes later on, may be more potential than actual) into the Conversionists and the Neutrals. Thus there is a species of non-professing "born Jew," whose very sense of kinship spurs him on to lead his brethren to the light of Christianity or some form of Secularism or Nothingism; and there is another species of still racially sympathetic deserter who is contented with his individual light, or at least does not direct his propagandist activity against Jews, apart from the general mass of erring mankind. So with the "unsympathetic," non-professing Jews; the Indifferentist section of whom is so out of touch with Judaism as not even to desire its disappearance. But these sub-divisions of non-professing Jews need not be sub-divided, as those of professing Jews will be; the analysis of those without the fold may have some psychological warrant, but it can have but little import for the microcosm of Anglo-Judæa.

Professing Jews are split up into professors of Supernatural Judaism, and into those who hold only Natural Judaism; while a transitional position appears to be occupied by the holders of semi-Natural Judaism. This last name I apply to the illogical creed of the reforming Reformers. The "Reforming Fathers" who rejected Rabbinical tradition and fell back on the Bible, pure and simple, took up an intelligible if hardly defensible attitude. They are in a sense the Protestants of Judaism,<sup>1</sup> though with less excuse than the Pro-

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<sup>1</sup> I confine my attention to English Reformed Judaism, though, of course, aware of the priority and greater importance of the German movement that started about the middle of the last century.



testants of Christianity. In one way they have been happier than their analogues, because the dogmatism of Luther, with his confession of Augsburg, has not been emulated—*Magna componere parvis* — by Professor Marks; our reformation falling rather into the hands of Erasmus and More than of the narrow clerics revolted by the narrownesses of Catholicism. But as ultimately the Protestants will inevitably protest against Christianity, so will those who have abandoned Rabbinical Judaism inevitably abandon Biblical Judaism. And at the present moment they are half on the way. Hence the untenable position of men like the self-styled “Judæus,” who calmly declare that the sacrificial portion of the (*Biblical*) ritual is opposed to their conceptions of the volitions of the Deity. Semi-Natural Judaism is thus the half-way house in which persons of feeble faith and feebler logic may halt between two opinions. Naturally the intervening shades between black and white are numerous, and thus this half-way house now counts among its secret temporary residents not a few of the more cultured members of the United Synagogue, who have approached it by other routes than Berkeley Street. These are the persons who, while not quite admitting to themselves that they do not accept the Bible literally, still insist most on its ethical aspects. It will be sufficient to say of this section that the individuals who compose it vary only in the proportion of Supernatural to Natural Judaism in their particular specimen of the hybrid compound I have roughly called *semi-Natural Judaism*.

Now for Supernatural Judaism. Of those who profess this—and they are the great body of Jews all over the world—the majority are “orthodox,” the minority “heterodox” (a word which of course could be taken to include all the other main branches, but of which I here *specialise* the application to Jews who accept Supernatural Judaism). “Orthodoxy” is the thorough maintenance of the traditional Judaism crudely sketched above. “Orthodox Judaism” is either *intelligently* held or *unintelligently*. It is the latter (*Sittlichkeit* or “my doxy”) with the mass, who are unable to define their belief except by negatives, a *change* being *not* “orthodox.” They confound the form of Judaism current in their youth with Judaism; and unfortunately it was a form corrupted by many un-Jewish beliefs and ceremonies which their creed caught of its neighbours, or broke out into of itself. It is amusing to learn that Maimonides was once “not orthodox.” Such people are, however, the common product of all revealed religions, as of those quasi-revelations, conventional customs. With the “unintelligently orthodox,” this mental attitude is

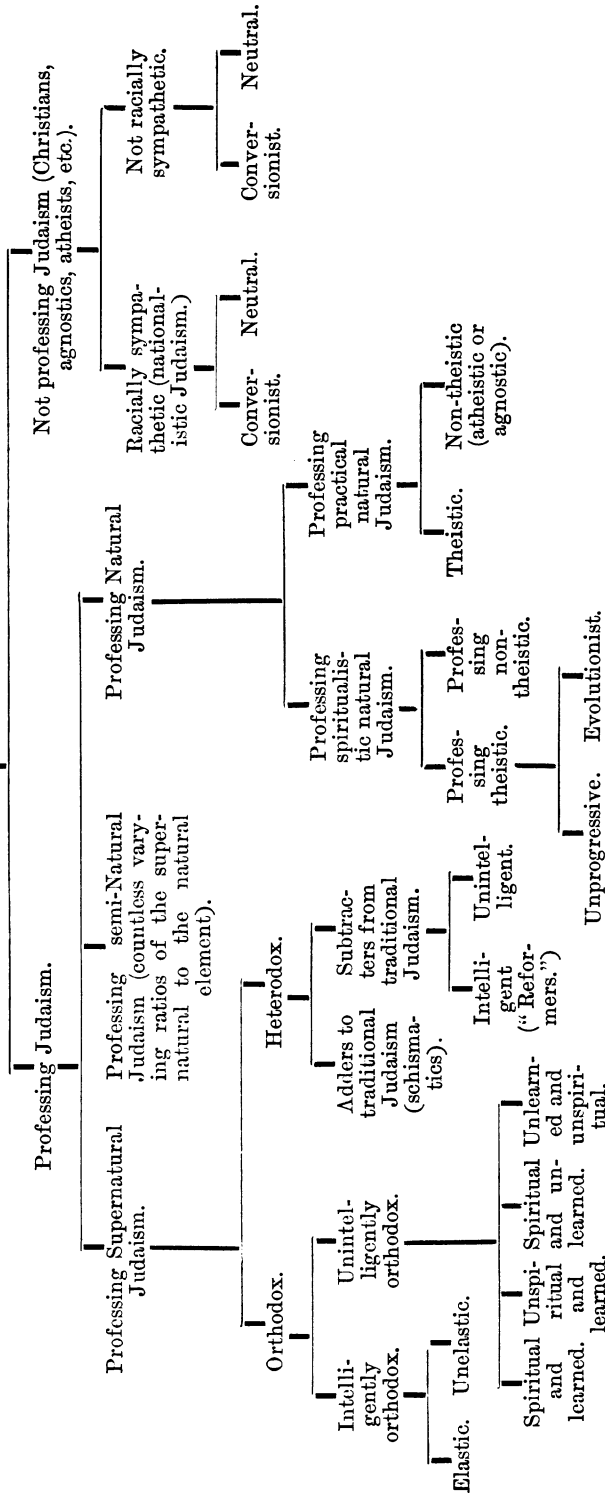
generally associated with ignorance of our history and of the fluidity of ceremonial forms and *Minhagim*; and the natural life of Judaism, which, though as definitely moulded as a man's body, is as capable of free and varied movement, has with them undergone a very *rigor mortis*. They comprise (a) the learned and spiritual, who have acquired some Hebrew lore, though in an unscientific way, display in some instances extraordinary intellectual acuteness, and import a certain amount of real religious feeling into their lives; (b) the learned yet unspiritual, who cannot rise above form, and who are in danger of forgetting morality but never ceremonialism; (c) the unlearned yet spiritual; (d) the unlearned and unspiritual.<sup>1</sup> Coming to the other prong of the bifurcation—the class of the Intelligently Orthodox, which is by its very definition not *unlearned* and not *unspiritual*, we find it break up into the Elastic and the Unelastic. The latter resemble the Unintelligently Orthodox in disliking *changes*, but do so from a different motive; from the danger of the admission of the *principle* of change, as well as from a congenital Conservatism which clings to and throws a halo over the past. Dr. Friedländer, who combines great erudition and spirituality, may perhaps serve as a type of this class; while the Rev. S. Singer and Mr. H. S. Lewis (who claims that Judaism is *אמונה*, a *reasoned faith*, and who stakes its truth on the *historical* truth of the revelation from Sinai), with their demand that “orthodoxy” shall be living, may stand as representatives of the former.

The Heterodox Jews in England consist of a small number of persons, as the Chassidim, who have added more or less to traditional Judaism; and of a large number of persons, as the “Reformers,” who have subtracted more or less from the same. The latter may profitably be divided into the Intelligently Heterodox and the Unintelligently Heterodox. The first of these includes those of the Biblical Reformers who have not yet gone further; the second consists of individuals of many shades of profession, and more of practice, who have in common that they have no clearly thought-out grounds for their dual laxity of thought and action. This class has its chief “local habitation” in the West-end of London. It is inferior only in numbers to that of the Unintelligently Orthodox, and possesses even more ignorance of our literature and history.

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<sup>1</sup> The rigidity of this classification is modified by the fact already admitted in spirit in my remarks on Revealed Religion, that *Sittlichkeit* is never quite unadulterated, the creed professed having always some *genuine* relation to the holder's needs and experiences.

# "Born Jews" in England.



Natural Judaism now alone remains. This divides itself into spiritualistic and practical, the latter comprising the doctrines of those who hold that Judaism consists mainly in (or at least is differentiated from other religions by) its *practical* methods of consolidating racial unity, or promoting the well-being, of course moral as well as material, of the social organism. This appears to me to be the view of Mr. Lucien Wolf (to whom, as to all others mentioned, I apologise if I have misread their published utterances). Though he holds it in a Theistic sense, it might quite conceivably be held in a non-Theistic sense, being thoroughly compatible with both the sociology and the agnosticism of Herbert Spencer, or with the Meliorism of George Eliot. Such Judaism must necessarily be "progressive" as it must be modifiable by the progress of sociology. But Spiritualistic Theistic Natural Judaism (which may be roughly said to find the motive for well-doing in the relation of man to God rather than to his fellow-man) is unprogressive in Professor Graetz and his English congeners, while it is progressive or evolutionary in Mr. Claude Montefiore, who conceives of further sublimations of spiritualistic sentiment. Non-Theistic Spiritualistic Natural Judaism is not inconceivable, and would simply be the cultivation of the spirituality of mankind, irrespective of an hypostatized God.

Since drawing up the above divisions, I have heard of a new species of Judaism—Nationalistic Judaism. It seems to consist in keeping up some Jewish observances and customs which are connected with the historical life of Israel; and in keeping down any inconvenient self-questionings as to its own rationality. It is "auld lang syne" raised to a religion. Though aspirations for Jewish nationality may exist apart from the faith anciently held by the Jewish nation, to my mind this particular non-militant ceremonialism, not supplemented by common spiritual beliefs, is rather a religion for insects, whose profit it is to approximate in colour to the hue dominant around. This sect, which is not numerous (leader and followers being as difficult to discriminate as the head and tail of Bright's famous Scotch terrier), is best classified, despite its pretensions, as an "intensitive form" of "Racially sympathetic Jews not professing Judaism."

I have now to inquire into the validity of these new Judaisms I have endeavoured to classify. In doing so, I shall have to repeat certain platitudes which are not yet acknowledged as such.

## V.

Man is a religion-making animal. He is far better differentiated from the other members of his genus by this epithet than by that of "cooking." And the rise and decay of the religions he makes reveal their common origin in the spirit of man, and their human kinship by the same "touches of nature" at every stage in their careers; in their zeniths and in their nadirs, and in the varying points of their courses, the curves of all the various orders of religions are almost parallel. Just as Peru and Mexico, cut off from each other and the rest of the world, developed civilisations startlingly similar to each other, and to those of the rest of the world at corresponding stages of development; so does the soul of man weave at each phase of its growth a corresponding conception of the Divine. Nor in thus tracing the evolution of God-ideas do we necessarily assert the creation of God by man, any more than in following up the development of man's astronomical ideas we assert his creation of the centripetal force; the evolution of man's religions may simply imply a continuous and progressive self-revelation of the Immanent Spirit.

The social organism secretes its religion, as it secretes its proportions of wisdom and folly, selfishness and altruism; and the processes of secretion, of exuviation or sloughing, the processes of growth and decay of individual organs, or of the whole organism, are as definite in this metaphorical as in a physiological organism. This is the meaning of Bacon's apophthegm that history is philosophy, teaching by example. Yet what we should expect *à priori* from the Uniformity of Nature comes upon us with a curious sense of pathos when, whether we examine the history of Buddhism or Brahminism, or Catholicism, or even Protestantism, we find at corresponding stages the same crystallisation or ossification of dogmas, the same benumbing reverence for revealed texts as the last word, the same multiplication of super-super-commentaries, the same rejection of all communion with God into the past, the same offer of Yesterday and To-morrow, but never of To-day, the same orthodoxy and heterodoxy, the same intolerance and time-serving, the same spiritual revolt of the preparers of the next phase, with which we are familiar in the history of Judaism. Truly did Xenophanes figure Nature as an infinite paroquet eternally repeating one note.

Fossilisation is the fate of all spiritual truths expressed

through material forms; the stirring of the spirit itself always comes to be the one deadly sin.

"Except the death of a nation there can be no event in history more profoundly solemn than the passing away of an ancient religion," says Draper, speaking of the fall of Paganism; and the words<sup>1</sup> he uses of that momentous event may be applied, without altering a letter, to the crisis through which Judaism, in common with Christianity, is passing, and which, with equal literalness, will serve as a description of the ever-widening breach between the old and the new, caused by the infusion of Western culture in British India, or in far Cathay. In most of the European and Asiatic civilisations of to-day we find that to the intellectual classes, "the national legends so jealously guarded by the populace, have become mere fictions." In our own microcosm we have not yet reached the point in the downward curve when, as Cicero tells us, Cato wondered how two augurs could meet without laughing. Nor is it likely that either Judaism or Christianity, in those death-throes which herald their re-birth to higher life, will pass through such corruptions as moribund Paganism. Both abound with ecclesiastics whose orthodoxy does not spring from "pusillanimity," but from a dread of losing their fulcrum of leverage for raising their flock. But the "inevitable day" can only be "postponed"; all the pæans of Professor Graetz, and of even the orthodox to the effect that we in England are witnessing a "revival" of Judaism, must not blind us to the facts. The flicker of antiquarian interest kindled by the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition was not a spiritual flame, nor is Judaism to be kept alive by researches in Pipe Rolls.

*Natura non facit saltum.* No phase of social life—be it intellectual, moral, artistic, or even sartorial—passes into another without a preparation visible to the man of insight. The very theory of historical evolution itself must pass through the stages itself predicts, and its own history is a proof of its principles. So Christianity is changing into Christism, and Judaism into monotheism. In only a few minds is the transition marked by acute consciousness of its drift; in most minds it takes place sub- or un-consciously. Nature, which hastens to throw a veil of green over the refuse in the neglected garden; Nature which fastens the coil of years on us as imperceptibly as the sunshine ripens the blossom; Nature is merciful. Only the few "in whom is the breath of life" are martyred. And if

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<sup>1</sup> *Intellectual Development of Europe*, Vol. I., Cap. viii.

our own martyrdoms do not take the grand proportions of that of a Jesus or a Bruno, yet the intimate connection of Judaism and social life prepares many discomforts for the heretic. But the bulk pass on into the new spiritual life imperceptibly, till one day a new generation arises which knows that it knows not Joseph. Such a transitional state necessarily bristles with compromises, with every variety of individual equation to the changing environment, and with every species of mental haze, vacillation and cowardice. The strand of the ocean of the new thought is strewn with Canute-chairs, each at its own arbitrary point.

Our classification goes to testify that all these marks of a transition-epoch are aggressively present in the Judaism of to-day. But if this is so, what will be the future of Judaism? Will it absorb or be absorbed? In the struggle for existence of those "concentrations of ideas and ideals" which make up religions, what will be the fate of that religion which has come down to us in such complex and heterogeneous development from the little Semitic tribe that was driven by drought to Egypt? Will it ultimately fulfil the prophecies in the old, full, material sense? Or will it do so only in the restricted moral monotheistic sense in which Professor Graetz claims that the flowing tide is with Judaism? Or will it not do so in any sense, but simply decay and die?

A great authority has said "Never prophesy unless you know"; and prophecy has always been looked upon as savouring of the miraculous. In reality, however, it is an extremely matter-of-fact sort of thing, and depends simply on knowledge of the present. The more thorough our acquaintance with the present, the more certainly we can predict the future. Omniscience of the present is omniscience of the future. Never prophesy unless you know—the present, is my proposed emendation. Prophecy, or rather taking "short" prophetic views, is possible, because the future *is* actually in the present, not only as the flower is in the seed, but as in the double cocoa-nut or the citron-tree are found seeds, buds and blossoms in every stage of development. Ygdrasil is a tree of this kind, with a few of the next year's buds and flowers always nestling among the fruit of the year that is. Judging, then, by that portion of the future which we find already in the present, we may answer the question whether Judaism will fulfil the prophecies in the old full material sense by a negative; the question whether it will do so in a limited sense, by a modified affirmative; while the last question, as merging into the larger question of the permanence of Theistic religion generally, it would be premature to answer

at all, except in so far as a partial answer is implicitly contained in the answer to the second.

Why a negative to the first? Because all over the world the old Judaism is breaking down. In Germany the reactionary work of a Hirsch has no seed of life within itself; the constructive work of Mendelssohn appears merely to have disintegrated; the plutocracy is ennobled and goes over to Christianity, most frequently to the Catholic form of it; the educated are chiefly agnostics, and are not even inspired by that hollow ghost of racial unity which is born of interest in one another's births, marriages, and deaths; in Austria, as we have been told in this very magazine, the Jewish teachers have openly broken with Judaism; in Australia Judaism is an anæmic invalid; in America, even more than in Germany, the boldest, the most liberal, and the purest doctrines of Natural Religion are preached by *salaried* Jewish ministers.<sup>1</sup> America holds up the mirror in which not a few of our leading men see the face they dare not wear in this country; American Judaism reflects "the very form and pressure of the age." And it is healthier than our own, because there is a recognised outlet for the humours of free-thought; Judaism as a profession not involving the profession of Judaism, though that species of racial unity which Germany does not possess is so strong across the Atlantic as to pass into an evil; the present a Jew gives to his wife on her birthday being gravely chronicled in the Jewish organs. In England the idolatry of blind Bible-

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<sup>1</sup> I cite at random from a report in the *American Israelite*, the "platform" of Rabbi Krauskopf of Philadelphia, as expounded to a vast audience at a Sunday-Sabbath service, at which a new ritual, compiled by him, was used. "We advance from the old to the new for the maintenance of religion, and for the preservation of Judaism. The days of the Church and Temple are numbered. We believe in the existence and Fatherhood of God, the Divine Origin of life, the existence of animate moral law as starting-points of religion. We refuse to look upon Judaism as the absolutely perfect and exclusively God-given religion. We discard the belief in a God who is *man magnified*, who has his abode somewhere in the interstellar spaces, who transgresses his own laws of nature by working miracles, who is actuated by human passions. . . . We discard the belief that the Bible was written by God, or by man under the dictation of God, and that its teachings are therefore infallible, and binding upon all men and ages. . . . We discard the belief in the coming of a Personal Messiah, who will lead us back to Palestine for the purpose of establishing a theocracy to which all the nations of the earth shall be tributary. We reject the belief in bodily resurrection, hell torments, Paradisian rewards, prophecy, all Biblical and Rabbinical beliefs, and rites and ceremonies and institutions which neither elevate nor sanctify our lives, which are for the most part un-Jewish, an infusion of ancient mythology, accretions of mediævalism, grafts from heathen philosophy, which, however comforting and useful they may have been in their day, are in our times obsolete, misleading, and even frequently injurious." Yet the Rabbi puts forward this creed as Judaism.



worship has died out among the cultured. Both "orthodox" and "reform" Judaism seem to suffer from that defect which Oriental thought regarded as so serious—sterility. The "Biblical" rock of the Reform Movement is proving a quicksand. The history of nineteenth century Anglo-Christian Protestantism has been paralleled in Anglo-Jewish Protestantism. Without a Tractarian movement, we have seen some members of the flock retreating to the fold, and others venturing forth into "fresh woods and pastures new." What new adherents have the Reformers gained? Scarcely one; though many Jews have gone through an analogous and sometimes a more comprehensive spiritual enfranchisement. Certainly Reform does not seem to attract our young theological students as one would have imagined, and the ratio of our youthful clerics who preach Reform to those who preach orthodoxy still varies with the ratio of Reform pulpits to Orthodox.

Yes, both Biblical and Rabbinical Judaism seem to have had their day. The cloak that could not be torn off by the tempest of Christianity and Persecution bids fair to be thrown off under the sunshine of Rationalism and Tolerance.

My affirmative answer to the second question was only a *modified* affirmative, because it is doubtful whether Natural Judaism is not a striking contradiction in terms. The answers of Professor Graetz, etc., to the question of "Has Judaism a future?" seem almost tantamount to "Yes, Judaism will have a future if the future has no Judaism."

Can the alleged ideal elements which he or Mr. Montefiore disengages from concrete Judaism, with its wealth of dietary and ceremonial legalism, constitute a Judaism in anything but name? Or, rather, can the residuum of Judaism, *consistently* eviscerated in their spirit, be termed Judaism? <sup>1</sup> Granting

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<sup>1</sup> For Professor Graetz himself often appears to me hazy and rhetorical, and Mr. Montefiore not entirely consistent with himself. Mr. Montefiore seems to recognise one *specifically Jewish* doctrine, which may roughly be called "the Election of Israel," and which he says cannot be regarded as "repugnant to reason, unless the idea of God revealing himself in history be also so regarded." But he afterwards says (*A Justification of Judaism*, p. 11), "the essential dogmas of Judaism, including 'Inspiration and the Call of Israel,' are wholly independent of any belief in the miraculous, in the ordinary sense of the word." This assertion he believes would not be denied or even challenged by the leaders of "orthodox" Judaism (?). On page 12 he gives up the integrity and Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, saying "the Bible contains the essence of Judaism, though not always in a form which answers to the thought of the age." But if the Bible is not quite veracious, what irrefutable proof have we of "the Call of Israel," and what is the meaning of "Inspiration"? I am afraid that the "reconciliation of faith and criticism," of which Mr. Montefiore speaks approvingly in his Review of Cheyne's edition of the Psalms, is not reconcilable with perfect consistency.

that the thought of Israel widened and spiritualised itself unconsciously, as it doubtless did, is the *conscious* recognition that all religious thought expands (with the inevitable relativity the recognition assigns to such thought) the same thing as the subjective illusion that this thought has an absolute basis? The Jewish post-Mosaic mystic, whose thoughts "widened with the process of the suns," and who let his new spiritual imagination play about and sublimate the materialisms of the sacred text without suspecting that the halo was round his own head, was in a very different position, psychologically, from the modern self-conscious spiritual Jew, who perceives the illusion. "A creed which can properly be described as the 'Religion of a Book' can have no commanding future before it," says Mr. Montefiore. No such thought could ever have clouded the naïve Judaism of the pious Jew of old, who read himself between the lines of his text. Judaism *has* always been this very species of creed which Mr. Montefiore says can have no commanding future before it. We are thus brought back to our question of whether the species of "Judaism" which is alleged to *have* a commanding future before it can be rightly called Judaism. The question is precisely in the same plane with a question as to how far a naturally-deduced *monogamy*, without a belief in the revelation to Joseph Smith, would be entitled to the name of Mormonism; or what pretensions "Robert Elsmerism" has to the name of Christianity.

There are two ways of looking at such questions, the logical and the historical. A newly-discovered animal would only get one of the old class-names if, in essential features, it resembled some already known; if the differences were too great it would have a new name all to itself. But moral and social nomenclature, dealing as it does mainly with living and incessantly changing ideas, habits, and emotions, where the new springs from the old, is not settled by a scientific appeal to the olden connotation of the terms. As a rule, when changes go on imperceptibly, the old name is kept, as with "Conservatives," or *The Fortnightly Review*—now published monthly. When it is a conscious change, the name is altered if it is desired to emphasize the difference, as with "Liberal Unionist," and kept if it is wished not to break with the past nor to lose the peaceful advantages of historical continuity. For a rose by any other name does not always smell so sweet. The power of epithets for good and evil is immense. Had Cardinal Newman's final religious development not had a name waiting for it, he would probably have called it a form of Protestantism; just as the High Church "Protestants"

who went a fair way from Protestantism did not care to accentuate their differences by that greatest of all differences, a new name.

The *Times* printing-press bears little resemblance to the invention of Guttenberg, but it is still a "printing-press"; a battle is still a battle, though the clubs of primitive man have been exchanged for the cannon of his civilised descendants; Beethoven's symphonies have little in common with the oaten strains of the shepherd "*recubans sub tegmine fagi*," but they are both "music"; and, to take an instance of degeneration, the modern practisers of "the Pyrrhic dance" are still "the Greeks." So, although *logically* a Judaism which does not accept the Biblical account of the revelation on Sinai may seem to differ literally *toto cælo* from the ancient theocracy which for thousands of years had revelation for its central pivot, and was so essentially a revealed religion that the philosophers who laid down its dogmas often forgot to posit Revelation; yet, despite this almost antithetical difference, the new phenomenon, in so far as it is conceived as a development of the old Judaism, has an hereditary right to that title.

And assuredly Judaism has exhibited a constant development, amid not unfrequent reversions to earlier types. We see the new *Weltanschauung* in Ecclesiastes and Job, and can trace the growth of that idea of a material Messiah which was later on to coalesce with the Neo-Platonic doctrine of the *logos*, and with the universal myth of immaculate conception, in the metaphysical dogmas of Christianity; from the composite blend of savage and spiritual elements that constitutes Pentateuchal Judaism, we see the continuous spiritualisation of the religion in the Prophets, till the grosser elements vanish in men like Hillel and Jesus, the latter of whom unduly exaggerated one pole of the dualism of legalism and spiritualism, as the Pharisees exaggerated the other; on surer lines the evolution went on within the ancient fold of Judaism itself, and we see the advent of new problems and wider conceptions, and can watch the birth of scientific metaphysics and the decay of Haggada and Halacha. The dogma controversy is a striking proof of how far some minds had outgrown Biblical Judaism,<sup>1</sup> for, as already pointed out, the dogmatists sometimes legislated for their own peace of mind just as Rubin

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<sup>1</sup> The sixth, twelfth and thirteenth creeds of Maimonides are obviously post-Pentateuchal developments. When Mr. Schechter says "Surely Maimonides and his successors did succeed in having a religion depending directly on God, with the most ideal and highest aspirations for the future," and when he further speaks of the needs of the present day, he implicitly admits the evolutionary possibilities of Judaism.

tried to conciliate Spinozism with Judaism. And the reviewer, who asked Rubin how the enactment concerning Tephillin could be deduced from the monism of the great thinker, put his finger roughly on the beautiful bubble of pseudo-reconciliation. The would-be conciliator, who is aware of the growth of his spiritual stature, is at a disadvantage compared with the conciliator who starts with the certainty that the new thing which he feels to be true *must* be reconcilable with the old thing which he never doubts to be true. The logic of the Talmud is not the logic of Aristotle, not even of ordinary common sense; but on its own lines it is rigidly precise. All its divergences from natural logic arise from the fact that it starts from a datum of which natural logic knows nothing, viz., the dogma of the perfection of the Torah. That "when two texts are discrepant, a third will be found to reconcile them" would never occur to the outside logician. But, on the hypothesis that there is no real discrepancy in the Torah, the rule is rigorously logical. To the New Judaism, however, such discrepancy argues rather the imperfection of the text than of the commentator's faculty of exegesis. Rubin, had he possessed a more naïve faith in the perfection of the *Ethics* and the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, would have found the challenge to deduce therefrom the necessity of phylacteries only stimulate his ingenuity, as that of Albertus Magnus was stimulated by his desire to combine the Christian morality with the Aristotelian.

This continuous internal development, then, shall be our warrant for not altogether refusing the name of Judaism to the newest outcomes of the process, though in view of the possible elimination of circumcision and Tephillin, of the dietary laws, of even Passover and the beautiful Seder-night, it may become externally unidentifiable with most of its preceding phases. As continuous internal development is all we really mean by the "identity" of the man with the child, so the "personal identity" of Israel is not lost so long as its metamorphoses, however astonishing, connect themselves by a retrospective consciousness with the past. But even so, another difficulty awaits us. How are we to distinguish this Natural Religion, which we have at last allowed to call itself Natural Judaism, from other similar embodiments of the *Zeit-Geist*? What does it offer to the proselytes Professor Graetz looks for, more than any other form of natural theism? Why should not all the people who, according to Professor Graetz and Mr. Montefiore, must be Jews, not call themselves followers of Goethe, whom Mr. Montefiore admires so much, or of Matthew Arnold who (save that his critical intellect

replaced the metaphysical static by a moral dynamic God) was a model Jew, rivalling even Mr. Montefiore in sympathetic appreciation of the Old Testament. If it be replied that the new Judaism offers the free lances of theology that mighty advantage—an old name, I must point out that ours is not the only offer. Is there not an ever-growing school of Christian theologians who, having evolved for themselves this same common religion, wish to call it Christianity, and who certainly would have a superior ready-made material and spiritual organisation to work it with? And is it not a sublime yet melancholy illustration of the growth of the human spirit, that two ancient religions that have lived in the embittered hostility of antithetical dogmas for so many centuries, should now be contending for the glory of giving their name to the new dogmas both now hold in common? Yet to my mind, the real struggle of the future lies between the essence of Judaism and the essence of Christism (not of Christianity), the scientific morality of Moses and the emotional morality of Christ; and a compromise between the religious provisions for moral geniuses, and those for moral dullards, will perhaps form the religion of the future.

Turning finally from the intellectual confusion which characterises English Judaism to its practical aspects, we find it far from barren in good and with a unique philanthropic organisation; yet the motive force of its good actions does not lie in Jewish beliefs at all, but in its own native goodness and *rachmanuth*. Of course it has the defects of its qualities, being very unspiritual. For it cares so much about dogmas that it has ceased to care about them at all—I mean the mass is so sure of the truth of the Bible, that it believes every Jew shares its belief. The tests of a man's Judaism are thus purely external, and a man who belongs to a synagogue, marries within the pale, subscribes to the charities and the *Jewish Chronicle*, fasts on the Day of Atonement, and eats unleavened bread on Passover, over and above fulfilling the not specifically Jewish duties of a good man and citizen, is almost an ideal Jew. Still the one-sided latitudinarianism which allows any divagations in theory, but few in practice, may be pushed too far. When a Jewish journal recently proposed that no one should be excommunicated (metaphorically speaking) who subscribed to the charities, it not only so enlarged the religious connotation of "Jew" as to deprive it of all meaning whatever by reaching the point where the stretched elastic breaks, but was extremely unfair to the impecunious agnostic, himself in need of charity. A frequent fallacy of the Jewish press (which Professor Graetz

shares) is the speaking as if to remain a Jew *always* involved sacrifices. This is doubtless the case in some countries, but in England at least it is often the other way. Here Judaism is often its own reward, and apostasy its own punishment. "Robert Elsmere" (with the private pecuniary resources of the hero) did not reach so deep a note of tragedy as that fine novel of Mrs. Gaskell's, where a clergyman also threw up his position from spiritual difficulties, but *his* living was his living in the plain workaday sense of the word.

## VI.

And now by the light, such as it is, which we have gained since we left them, let us take a last look at the two brilliant, if insufficiently luciferous, articles which formed our starting point. This light shows—to me at least—that Mr. Schechter (though without admitting my interpretation), has been giving us the dogmas of a religion as formulated from time to time by thinkers either inspired by their faith in a traditional literature, or seeking to find in this same literature an inspiration for their larger faith; while Professor Graetz has been trying to isolate one or two important elements of Judaism, and to present this fraction as a substitute for the whole. And it also seems to reveal a certain amount of mental patchwork in the essays of both of these gifted writers. Each wishes to a greater or less extent to eat his cake and to have it too; a dual desire shared by most of the "heterodox." On page 7 of his article, Professor Graetz says that Judaism is not a mere doctrine of faith, and he even doubts whether it has *any* article of faith. But the "minimum of religion" of even the Council of Lydda was far more pregnant in meaning to the Jewish mind of the second century than it would be to ours. The three principles of the avoidance of idolatry and attack on human life, and the preservation of chastity, were far wider in involved beliefs, and latent implications and deductions; in any case they are a curious commentary on Mr. Schechter's complaint that Judaism is now always something to be done. And if some "Pan-Judaic Synod" were to adopt them again, Renan and Frederic Harrison, Walt Whitman and Lord Tennyson, James Martineau and Herbert Spencer, would all be Jews—a sufficient proof of how many more riders such beliefs would imply to the ancient mind than to the modern. It is interesting to note as one of the clear expressions of opinion in Professor Graetz's article that he says the prophet

makes God say "I did not enjoin sacrifice at the exodus from Egypt." To me the saying shows how far Jeremiah, like Isaiah and Micah, had drifted from primitive Judaism—not what the essence of primitive Judaism was. Professor Graetz's claim, too, that the blend of religion and ethics is characteristic of Judaism alone, can hardly be sustained; equally doubtful is his assertion that the belief that Jesus is Christ has nothing to do with Christian charity.<sup>1</sup> Religion, when intelligent, focusses the whole of the devotee's mind round itself. Weaker members of a religion have always been able to keep their abstract faith and their worldly thoughts in different compartments of their minds, and it may even have been so with whole races. But, generally speaking, the fusion of a nation's faith and a nation's ethics is chemical, not mechanical. *Pro aris et focis* was the battle-cry of Ancient Rome, and the whole communal life circled round the religion. Professor Graetz's argumentative method, in fact, is to call all the best moral and religious conceptions of the human race Judaism, and then to calmly ascribe to Judaism (which thus, instead of being regarded as a single current of influence, becomes hypostatised as a sort of *deus ex machinâ*) all that was effected by the natural growth of the human spirit. This contention is naturally supplemented by the daring statement that if Judaism disappeared, the ethical postulates which it includes, and on which the continuance of society and civilisation depends, would disappear also. This is mere tautology or question-begging, as the ethical postulates which it includes are assumed not to exist outside Judaism—a bombastic assumption, for which we have only the *ipse dixit* of the learned Professor. A lack of historical sympathy with the *enfanteries* of primitive cults is also indicated by his sweeping denunciation of the whole ancient mythology as the "product of mad fancy." One begins to imagine he is reading one of the French *philosophes* of the eighteenth century, and prepares himself to hear that all religions (except Judaism, *bien entendu*) were the invention of priests. Another transparent *petitio principii* is his assertion that "Judaism, which is throughout rationalistic, is the *sole* (!) stronghold of free

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<sup>1</sup> Burnouf's theory, on which Professor Graetz relies, that the ethical element of a religion is a later stratum than the intellectual or emotional elements, can only have reference to the ethics as *transformed* by filtration through the latter, as ethics of some sort must always be at least as old in a community as religion; and while it is true that "Christianity only made ethics its own after a long development," that was because it started by being *ethics incarnate*. The *conscious* aiming at ethics marks rather a falling-off—inevitable, alas!

thought in the religious sphere." On page 13 the Professor ventures on a prophecy safer than mine, because it deals with the "might have been." "If the apostles of the pure monotheistic idea had been destroyed in their conflicts with the Syrians, Chaldeans, Greeks and Romans, the madness of idolatry, with its orgiastic forms of worship, would still exist to-day, and the civilisation of Europe would not have developed itself." With what wider vision and sympathy speaks the author of "Natural Religion." "It was not the invasion of a Semitic religion that put to flight these bright visions, but the natural progress of human development, giving birth to reflection, philosophy and morality." There were great men before Agamemnon, and great men before Moses, and it is high time that the complacent "I was born a happy Christian child" feeling, the comfortable pity for the Pagans who were damned by their date, should give place to a broader view of the facts, which are hidden rather than described by the theological labels pasted over them.

Had Professor Graetz contented himself with claiming, as Matthew Arnold does, that the secret of Hebraism, and not the secret of Hellenism, is that by which a nation lives and is exalted; had he, while insisting as strongly as possible on Israel's special instinct for righteousness, admitted that Confucius and Sophocles had also some notions of the categorical imperative, and that the Aryan was not altogether given over to metaphysics and libidinousness; and had he been satisfied that Hebraism should be the greatest, though by no means the only constituent of the "many-coloured" dome of ideals which one foresees staining "the white radiance" of the future, he would have been on safe ground. As it is, his attitude recalls that of the mediæval Jews, who evolved the pleasing fiction that Aristotle owed his philosophy to Judaism, to which he had been converted.

Finally, Professor Graetz still looks forward to Judaism continuing to perform a function and fulfil a mission, apart, it would seem, from the natural working of the yeast of Hebraism, already and inseparably mingled with the civilisation of the world. There is something touching and sublime in the common belief of a people in an apparent impossibility, in the ultimate return of its national hero, in the recovery of its olden glories, in the triumph of its national ideals after persecution and repression, something pathetic in its simple faith and credulous hope, as of a mother who clasps her dead child to her breast, and will not let it go. Some such spirit, as naïve and as burning, breathes through a myriad volumes of our post-exilic literature, and yet gladdens the simple



heart of the Russian pauper as he sings the hymns of hope and trust after his humble Friday night's meal. Some such faith still solaces the foot-sore hawker amid the jeers and blows of the drunkard and the bully, and transfigures the squalid Ghetto with celestial light. Some such hope has been the inspiration of countless sacrifices and martyrdoms, it has touched otherwise unhallowed lips with sacred fire, it has been the "blessed vision" that opened before the eyes of the dying, the sanctifying breath that preserved millions of the living from corruption. And now, after all this travail of centuries, comes Professor Graetz with his chilling enthusiasm, with his depressing assurance that Judaism has still to bring to reality the ideals of humanity, of monotheism and of religious rationalism—ideals which would equally live or die were every concrete Jew annihilated this very day. The daughter of Zion seemed to herself to press a living child to her bosom, but behold it is vanished, and our latter-day Solomon has adjudged her a dead one. Solomon is doubtless wise, but oh, the irony of history!

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

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